AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

1. (Currently Amended) A filtering device which filters original image data, said original image data having original luminance data and color difference data, comprising:

a generating processor that generates first luminance data and second luminance data such that said original luminance data is separated into said first luminance data and said second luminance data according to a predetermined ratio;

a filtering processor that filters said second luminance data by a low-pass filter so as to transform said second luminance data into third luminance data while the first luminance data and the color difference data are not low-pass filtered; and

a synthesizing processor that synthesizes said first luminance data, said color difference data, and said third luminance data into synthesized image data,

wherein the third luminance data defines a blurred luminance image and the synthesized image data comprises a soft focus image in which the color balance of the original image data is preserved.

2. (Original) A filtering device according to claim 1, further comprising:

an image reduction processor which reduces the image resolution corresponding to said second luminance data before said filtering processor filters said second luminance data; and

an image restoration processor which restores the image resolution, which has been reduced by said image reduction processor, after said filtering processor filters said second luminance data.

3. (Original) A filtering device according to claim 2, further comprising:

a second filtering processor which filters said second luminance data which has been filtered by said filtering processor once already, after said image restoration processor restores said image resolution.

4. (Currently Amended) A filtering device according to claim 2, wherein said image resolution is selectable ~~can be selected~~ from a stepwise series of predetermined resolutions.

5. (Original) A filtering device according to claim 1, wherein said generating processor generates said first luminance data and said second luminance data independently.

6. (Original) A filtering device according to claim 5, wherein said original image undergoes a gamma correction using a first gamma curve so as to generate said first luminance data, and said original image undergoes a second gamma correction using a second gamma curve so as to generate said second luminance data, said second gamma curve being different from said first gamma curve.

7. (Original) A filtering device according to claim 6, wherein said second gamma curve is selected from a stepwise series of predetermined gamma curves.

8. (Original) A filtering device according to claim 1, wherein said predetermined ratio is selected from a stepwise series of predetermined ratios.

9. (Canceled)

10. (Currently Amended) A filtering device according to ~~claim 9~~ claim 8, further comprising:

an image reduction processor which reduces the image resolution corresponding to said second luminance data before said filtering processor filters said second luminance data; and

an image restoration processor which restores the image resolution, which has been reduced by said image reduction processor, after said filtering processor filters said second luminance data.

11. (Original) A filtering device according to claim 10, wherein said original image undergoes a second gamma correction using a second gamma curve so as to generate said second luminance data.

12. (Original) A filtering device according to claim 11, wherein at least one of said predetermined ratio, said image resolution, and said second gamma curve are changed so as to change the extant of the soft focus of said soft focus image.

13. (Currently Amended) A digital camera which filters original image data, said original image data having original luminance data and color difference data, comprising:

a generating processor that generates first luminance data and second luminance data such that said original luminance data is separated into said first luminance data and said second luminance data according to a predetermined ratio;

a filtering processor that filters said second luminance data by a low-pass filter so as to transform said second luminance data into third luminance data while the first luminance data and the color difference data are not low-pass filtered; and

a synthesizing processor that synthesizes said first luminance data, said color difference data, and said third luminance data into synthesized image data.

wherein the third luminance data defines a blurred luminance image and the synthesized image data comprises a soft focus image in which the color balance of the original image data is preserved.

14. (Currently Amended) A filter processing method for filtering original image data, ~~said~~ the original image data having original luminance data and color difference data, the method comprising ~~the steps of:~~

generating first luminance data and second luminance data such that ~~said~~ the original luminance data is separated into ~~said~~ the first luminance data and ~~said~~ the second luminance data according to a predetermined ratio;

low-pass filtering said the second luminance data so as to transform ~~said~~ the second luminance data into third luminance data without low-pass filtering of the first luminance data and the color difference data; and

synthesizing ~~said~~ the first luminance data, ~~said~~ the color difference data, and ~~said~~ the third luminance data into synthesized image data.

wherein the third luminance data defines a blurred luminance image and the synthesized image data comprises a soft focus image in which the color balance of the original image data is preserved.

15. (New) The digital camera according to claim 13, wherein said predetermined ratio is selected from a stepwise series of predetermined ratios

16. (New) The filter processing method according to claim 14, further comprising selecting the predetermined ratio from a stepwise series of predetermined ratios

17. (New) The digital camera according to claim 13, said generating processor being configured to perform a first gamma correction on said original image data utilizing a first gamma curve so as to generate said first luminance data and to perform a second gamma correction on said original image data using a second gamma curve so as to generate said second luminance data, said second gamma curve being different from said first gamma curve.

18. (New) The filter processing method according to claim 14, wherein the generating comprises performing a first gamma correction on the original image data utilizing a first gamma curve so as to generate the first luminance data and performing a second gamma correction on the original image data using a second gamma curve so as to generate the second luminance data, the second gamma curve being different from the first gamma curve.

19. (New) The filter processing method according to claim 14, the generating comprising generating the first luminance data and the second luminance data independently.

20. (New) The digital camera according to claim 13, wherein said generating processor is configured to independently generate said first luminance data and said second luminance data ~~independently~~.

21. (New) The filter processing method according to claim 14, further comprising reducing the image resolution corresponding to the second luminance data before the low pass filtering of the second luminance data and restoring the image resolution, which has been reduced, after the low pass filtering of the second luminance data.